

Casework Assignment and Review Procedures

1 Scope

This document applies to individuals who perform examinations in the Hairs and Fibers and Geology sub-disciplines and Anthropology discipline.

2 Assigning Cases in the Trace Evidence Unit

The assignment of casework in the Trace Evidence Unit (TEU) is the responsibility of the Unit Chief (UC) or Supervisor. When a case is being assigned, the following steps are taken:

- If there was a previous submission on the case, the previously assigned Examiner will be assigned in Forensic Advantage (FA). If that Examiner is no longer in TEU, a new Examiner will be assigned by the UC or Supervisor. At the discretion of the UC or Supervisor, new cases with previous submissions can be assigned to a new Examiner.
- If a new Examiner assignment is required, the UC or Supervisor will make the assignment based on the Examiner's caseload and availability.

3 Assigning Cases in the Scientific and Biometrics Analysis Unit - Trace

The assignment of casework in the Scientific and Biometrics Analysis Unit - Trace (SBAU-Trace) is the responsibility of the UC or the Trace Evidence Supervisor. When a case is being assigned, the following steps are taken:

- The UC or Trace Evidence Supervisor will review the request and assign an examiner based on the circumstances of the case.
- If there was a previous submission in the case, the previously assigned Examiner will be assigned in Forensic Advantage (FA). If that Examiner is no longer in SBAU-Trace, a new Examiner will be assigned by the UC or Trace Evidence Supervisor. At the discretion of the UC or Supervisor, new cases with previous submissions can be assigned to a new Examiner.
- If a new Examiner assignment is required, the UC or Trace Evidence Supervisor will make the assignment based on the Examiner's caseload and availability.

4 Case Records

Case records are prepared in accordance with the FBI Laboratory Operations Manual (LOM). Case records consist of all case-related documentation that support the results and/or conclusions

presented in a *Laboratory Report* (7-1, or 7-1 LIMS,). The case records contain administrative and examination records for one Examiner. It may be contained in a 1A [*Supporting Documentation Envelope* (7-251)] as a hardcopy, as a digital file(s) uploaded to Sentinel, or as a combination of both hardcopy and digital files.

4.1 Administrative Records

Records that do not pertain to the conclusions of the examinations performed are considered administrative records. The Laboratory number must be present on each administrative record page.

The following are defined as administrative records in the Trace Evidence Unit and Scientific and Biometrics Analysis Unit - Trace:

- Laboratory Work Sheet (7-2) (Legacy)
- Search Slip (Legacy)
- Chain-of-Custody Log (7-243 and/or 7-243a) or FA Chain of Custody
- Secondary Evidence Inventory (Legacy or FA) or Secondary Evidence Log
- Activity and Communication Log (7-245) or Case Record Communication Log
- Copy of Request for Examination
- Case Record Report
- Explanation and approval for any minor deviations from SOPs or a Major Deviation Request (7-258), if applicable

4.2 Examination Records

Examination records are notes, forms, printouts, charts, and other records that pertain to the conclusions of the examinations performed. The following are defined as examination records in the Trace Evidence Unit and Scientific and Biometrics Analysis Unit - Trace:

- Physical Scientist notes
- Examiner notes
- Verification form (Legacy only)
- Fiber chart
- Instrument printouts
- Photographs

4.3 Hardcopy Case Records

At the time of the technical and administrative review, all records generated under one request for examination must be accounted for in their entirety. When information is on two sides of a piece of paper, this counts as two pages.

The following will be done prior to the reviews:

- The Examiner will initial each page of the examination records to indicate that he or she has reviewed each page.
- Number the pages of the examination records in the form “__ of __” or “_/_”. Only the first page of the records is required to record the total number of pages (*e.g.*, 1 of 6, or 1/6).
- On the “Description of Enclosures” area of the 1A (7-251) envelope, at a minimum, write the number of pages of examination records present, the number of administrative records present, and check off the types of records enclosed.

Each Examiner is responsible for generating a 1A (7-251) envelope that will contain the hardcopy administrative and examination records for the case. If the material is larger than 8 ½ x 11”, it will be placed in an appropriate size box with the filled out 1A (7-251) envelope attached and designated as a 1C. Separate 1A (7-251) envelopes must be generated for each Examiner. Information from the 1A (7-251) will be added into Sentinel and the 1A (7-251) serial number generated will be recorded on the 1A (7-251).

4.4 FA Case Records

If examination records are maintained only in FA, personnel preparing the examination records will record agreement with the content by approving the record within the Case Record Object Repository. When examination records are prepared by personnel other than the reporting examiner, the examiner will record his/her review of the records within the Case Record Communication Log.

The FA Publish and Packet Manager will be used to generate and account for all FA administrative and examination records included in a Case Record 1A. This electronic file will then be uploaded into Sentinel and serialized.

5 Verification and Blind Verification of Examination Results

Refer to specific discipline procedures for verification or blind verification procedures and records. For Legacy cases, verifications will be recorded on the Verification Form (Refer to Appendix A). Verifications for cases in FA will be recorded in FA.

Prior to a *Laboratory Report* being issued, an examiner may disseminate expedited results or partial results of an examination per *LOM – Practices for Preparing, Reviewing, and Issuing Laboratory Reports and Retaining Records in Forensic Advantage (FA)*. Results not requiring verification or blind verification according to the specific discipline procedure do not require verification prior to dissemination.

6 Review Procedures

6.1 Technical Review Procedures

All *Laboratory Reports* (7-1 or 7-1 LIMS) containing examination results written by TEU or SBAU-Trace Examiners will be technically reviewed by a Technical Leader or Examiner qualified in that discipline prior to or concurrent with the administrative review. Once an individual is qualified to perform examinations in a specific discipline, they are authorized to perform technical reviews of reports within that discipline. The technical review will be carried out as described in the LOM - *Practices for Preparing, Reviewing, and Issuing Laboratory Reports and Retaining Records in Forensic Advantage (FA)* or LOM - *Practices for Preparing, Reviewing, and Issuing Laboratory Reports and Retaining Records for Legacy Cases*.

6.2 Administrative Review Procedures

All *Laboratory Reports* written in TEU and SBAU-Trace will be administratively reviewed prior to the report being issued. The Unit Chief, Supervisor, or an Examiner will perform the administrative review. The administrative review will be carried out as described in the LOM - *Practices for Preparing, Reviewing, and Issuing Reports and Retaining Records in Forensic Advantage (FA)* or the LOM - *Practices for Preparing, Reviewing, and Issuing Reports and Retaining Records for Legacy Cases*. If the administrative reviewer is also qualified in the discipline of the *Laboratory Report*, they may conduct the technical review, verification of identifications and associations, and the administrative review.

6.3 Record of Technical and Administrative Reviews

6.3.1 Technical and Administrative Reviews – FA Cases

Upon completion of the technical review, the reviewer will record their agreement with the examination process in FA. Upon completion of an administrative review, the reviewer will record their approval of the *Laboratory Report* in FA. If the technical and administrative reviews are conducted by the same person, the reviewer will record their approval with the examination process and of the *Laboratory Report* in FA.

6.3.2 Technical and Administrative Reviews – Legacy Cases

Record of the technical and administrative reviews will be on the file copy of the *Laboratory Report* as follows:

If the technical and administrative reviews are conducted by the same person, then the following will be used:

Technical and Administrative Reviewer _____ Date _____

If the technical and administrative reviews are not conducted by the same person, then the following will be used:

Technical Reviewer _____ Date _____

Administrative Reviewer _____ Date _____

7 References

- FBI Laboratory Operations Manual.
- FBI Laboratory Quality Assurance Manual.

Rev. #	Issue Date	History
5	02/03/2020	Removed Trace Evidence from the title. Changed 'geological' to 'geologically-derived' in Scope. Updated SBAU-Trace name throughout. Updated Section 2. Added 'Secondary Evidence Log' to list in Section 4.1. Removed language 4.4, and 6.1 that is covered in the LOM. Added language to address expedited results requiring verifications in Section 5.
6	05/03/2021	Changed 'able' to 'authorized' in Section 6.1. Scope updated to include new discipline names. 'Category of testing' changed to 'discipline' throughout. Removed reference to TEDAC report 7-273/7-273 LIMS throughout. Updated Section 6.1 to include reports containing examination results and concurrent reviews.

Redacted - Signatures on File

Approval

Trace Evidence Unit Chief: Date: 04/30/2021

Scientific and Biometrics
 Analysis Unit Chief: Date: 04/30/2021

Hairs and Fibers Technical
 Leader: Date: 04/30/2021

Geology Technical Leader: Date: 04/30/2021

Anthropology Technical
 Leader: Date: 04/30/2021

QA Approval

Quality Manager: Date: 04/30/2021

Appendix A: *Trace Evidence Verification Form (Legacy)*

Redacted - Form on File